



Research and Reference Service

OVERSEAS REACTION TO THE CUBAN SITUATION
(As of 8 a.m., November 21, 1962)

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SUMMARY

The Soviet Union responded today by reporting the major points in the President's statement on Cuba.

They linked the lifting of the quarantine with an announcement cancelling the "state of readiness" maintained since October 23 by the Soviet armed forces. The Warsaw Pact alert also was cancelled.

So far, Moscow has not renewed its call for an American pledge not to invade Cuba.

A TASS dispatch, distributed abroad, led off with the President's order to lift the quarantine. It quoted the President as saying this move was in line with an understanding reached with Khrushchev. The U.S. has satisfied itself that all known missile sites in Cuba have been closed down and has received assurances that all IL-28 bombers "will be withdrawn in 30 days," the dispatch said.

No mention was made of inspection.

The Cubans responded quickly and at length with a commentary on the Havana television network last night. Castro's "firm but calm letter" to the United Nations placed the United States in the dilemma of "facing the civilized world as the provoker of war or declaring its readiness to make effective... the commitments President Kennedy entered into with Premier Khrushchev." According to the commentator, the President "reiterated his willingness to give guarantees against an invasion of our island by the United States." The IL-28's again were described as obsolete, and Castro's five points were mentioned.

Almost no press reaction has been reported from other areas on the press conference. The news came too late for early editions, and comment will be further delayed.

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Earlier, there had been a buildup of attention for several days on Castro's offer to allow bomber withdrawal. A few editors expected additional U.S. action on the issue.

Peking papers today carry Castro's letter to U Thant. The New China News Agency describes reports that the U.S. gave Khrushchev a "deadline" for agreement on removal of the planes.

SOVIET UNION

After a week during which Soviet propaganda marked time on Cuba, the President's press conference seemed to bring quick Soviet action. It is probable that Soviet propaganda soon will use the President's remarks about the fulfillment of certain USSR obligations to play up Moscow's "peaceful coexistence" role. Demands for America's adherence to its promises again will be emphasized.

Press Conference and Soviet Moves

The TASS report on the press conference has so far not been disseminated domestically. Soviet radio audiences heard in an unscheduled newscast at noon Moscow time only that the President has ordered the lifting of the naval quarantine. The TASS dispatch, distributed abroad, also led off with the President's order to lift the quarantine. But it explained that this move was made, according to the President, in line with an understanding reached with Khrushchev, after the U.S. had satisfied itself that all known missile sites in Cuba have been closed down, and after receiving assurances that all IL-28 bombers now in Cuba "will be withdrawn in 30 days."

TASS also carried the President's reference to the possibility that peace will come to the Caribbean if all offensive weapons are kept out of the Hemisphere in the future, an expectation which would have to be adequately verified. No mention was made of the specific issue of inspection. Furthermore, TASS cited the President's insistence that the U.S. would also have to be satisfied that Cuba is not being used to export revolution, and quoted him to the effect that the U.S. "shall neither initiate nor permit aggression in this Hemisphere."

Lastly, TASS quoted the President as saying that completion of the commitment on both sides and the achievement of a peaceful solution to the Cuban crisis "might well open the door to the solution of other outstanding problems." No mention has been made so far about Soviet expectations of U.S. adherence to its alleged commitment to guarantee a policy of non-aggression for Cuba.

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Linking its next moves to the President's orders to lift the naval quarantine, the Soviet Defense Minister was instructed by the Council of Ministers to end the "state of readiness" in the Soviet Armed Forces. At the same time, the Soviet commander of the Warsaw Pact forces issued instructions cancelling a number of yet unspecified military preparedness measures instituted when the Cuban crisis started. His order was based on the argument that tension in the Caribbean has eased, and so has related tension in Europe.

General

The week preceding the press conference saw no major Soviet propaganda moves on Cuba. The IL-28 issue, at that time the major stumbling block, was glossed over in Soviet output. Moscow also remained silent on UN negotiations, obscuring the fact that there the problem of inspection loomed large.

Such Soviet comment as was disseminated during the past week was primarily directed to Cuba and Latin America. It played up Soviet friendship and popular support for the Cubans. The more militant Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star, Soviet Defense Department organ) did remind the "imperialists" that Cuba is not alone, but otherwise the various audiences only heard again about popular support for Castro's "five point" demands.

CUBA

In line with its recent stress on the peace theme, Cuba was quick to respond to the President's statement. Castro was characterized as the "firm but calm" peacemaker by a commentator on the Havana television network last night.

According to the broadcast, the United States was placed in the position of provoking war or honoring its commitments to Khrushchev. The lifting of the naval blockade was a "partial application" of the agreement which "doubtlessly contributes to easing of tensions in the Caribbean."

The Cuban also said the President "reiterated his willingness to give guarantees against an invasion of our island by the United States."

In addition, the quarantine removal will facilitate withdrawal of the IL-28 bombers on which the U.S. has insisted for political reasons. Again Havana said the bombers are "obsolete, slow speed and low altitude" aircraft which "could not undertake offensive actions worthy of the name."

Castro's five-point program was mentioned, without detail, and reference was made to an alleged U.S. aircraft attack on a Cuban ship.

The President's refusal to end aerial surveillance "forces Cuba to remain alert," the broadcaster concluded.

Earlier, on November 15, Prensa Latina distributed a compilation of its daily announcements of U.S. "violations of Cuban territory." This included "400 acts of provocation, harassment, or aggression" over a 20-month period. Castro's letter of November 16 to U Thant pointedly declared: "... we state...our refusal of unilateral inspection on the part of any organization, national or international, of Cuban territory...."

LATIN AMERICA

Coverage has drastically declined in the Hemisphere. General support of the U.S. continues. Traditional concepts are being revised in some countries. Brazil continues its ploys. Cuba is stressing the peace theme, and underscores it by relinquishing the bombers.

Argentine Support

Media urged on-site inspection of bases. La Prensa recommended that the UN "take cognizance of the facts and intervene... in the verification of the dismantlement of the Cuban bases." The press strongly supported Argentine naval contribution to the quarantine. Striking a note of caution La Plata's El Argentino declared that "Latin America, which came forth unanimously against Cuban Communization, must now make an effort to check the rising wave of Fidelista infiltration...."

Changing Concepts

In Chile El Diario Ilustrado of Santiago stated editorially that there was considerable abuse of the blockade during the 19th century for imperialistic ends, but that "this measure used in a defensive and prudent manner, as President Kennedy has ordered, the more so with the backing of the consultative body of the OAS, constitutes an appropriate measure."

La Nacion, Chilean administration spokesman, comments on colonialism, "which /we/ Latin Americans do not desire for our countries" but Castro "either through ideological sectarianism, emotional maladjustment, or what have you, outraged this sentiment on converting Cuba into a modern version of the hated colonialism." It goes on to describe whose interests are served today by the anti-U.S. crusade: "Anti-Yankeeism originating in xenophobia and an inferiority complex is not today part of the Latin American struggle. It is an arm of Communist imperialism."

In Brazil, the November 24 issue of South America's magazine of greatest circulation, O Cruzeiro, carried an article by the respected

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political commentator Theophilo de Andrade which said, "Neutralism now reveals itself a deception to weaken those who adopt it and an open road for the Red forces obedient to the Kremlin. The only security against Communist imperialism is alliance with the West."

Brazil Continues its Ploys

Flying in the face of public opinion, as reflected by the Brazilian press, President Jango Goulart continues to play a lone hand in the Hemisphere. His latest move reported by France Presse is the designation of one of his most notoriously neutralist aides, Santiago Dantas, as a special emissary to Washington to explain Brazil's position to the U.S. administration.

He had previously indicated his displeasure with Brazilian Naval chiefs who favored positive military backing of the U.S. blockade. Retired Admiral Silvio Heck, an outspoken critic of Goulart's Cuban policy, was arrested. Vice Admiral Helio Garnier Sampaio was removed from his post as Commander of the Navy General Staff. He had proposed Brazilian destroyers rendezvous in Northeastern waters as a stand-by position nearer the Caribbean.

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WESTERN EUROPE

West European media expressed concern over the diplomatic stalemate in the Cuban crisis. Castro's intransigence, attributed in many quarters to Red China's support, was viewed as the major cause of the deadlock. Some papers warned against Soviet duplicity but others felt that Khrushchev was doing his best with the thorny Cuban problem. The U.S. was viewed as holding the top cards and urged to continue its firm stand. Prominence was given to reports of impending East-West negotiations and some attention was focused on Sino-Soviet relations.

Concern Over Delay

A number of papers expressed concern over the long delay in implementing the Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement. Red China was frequently seen as encouraging Castro's refusal to yield and as a source of embarrassment to the Soviet Union in its negotiations with the U.S. The pro-government Frankfurter Allgemeine observed that "there are many indications that the Soviets were willing to live up to their obligations, but pressure from Peking... has influenced the Soviet position." Milan's Corriere della Sera, conservative, wondered if Khrushchev was not influenced by Peking as "he would not want to be charged by the Chinese with being the leader that sacrificed the first communist regime in Latin America." The conservative Neue Tageszeitung, Vienna, editorialized that "it is the Kremlin's business to make clear to... Castro that... strategic considerations necessitate temporary withdrawals. This task is not easy if one considers the instigating role which Peking plays."

Warning of Duplicity

A few papers scored Soviet duplicity as an additional reason for the stalemate. Others held that Khrushchev was doing his best to terminate the crisis. Moderate-left Le Combat, Paris, held that "the mystery surrounding the direct Washington-Moscow talks..."

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surely indicates that efforts are being made not to hurt Soviet pride or Cuban susceptibility and that a delicate psychological operation is underway to reach a lasting amicable agreement." Conservative Le Figaro, Paris, also asserted that "there are chances for agreement in the near future between the U.S. and the USSR on Cuba."

U. S. Position Strong

Many papers felt that the U.S. enjoyed strong advantages in the present situation and argued against any concessions or any weakening of the original agreement. The pro-government Frankfurter Allgemeine, stated, "the Kremlin has once before maneuvered itself into a situation in which Washington was forced to reveal the brutal alternative" and asked, "does Moscow want to risk a second defeat?" Influential Le Monde, Paris, pointed out that a continuation of the blockade would reduce Cuba to the status of a semi-dependent country while the failure to carry out the agreement would permit Kennedy to reconsider his commitment not to invade. "The American position appears so comfortable that one can hardly see how Washington could feel obliged to make concessions," the paper concluded.

Further Negotiations Seen

The London Observer reported that Khrushchev had suggested a four point co-existence plan to the U.S. providing for Soviet military and political withdrawal from Cuba, western recognition of East Germany, and a nuclear test ban with a minimum of inspection. This was the subject of some comment. Munich's Sueddeutsche Zeitung, left-center, held that "any fear that Kennedy might accept Khrushchev's reported proposal to recognize the German Democratic Republic in exchange for complete Soviet withdrawal from Cuba is without foundation." By contrast, right-wing L'Aurore, Paris, felt that such proposals "reflect the present diplomatic orientation of Moscow and Washington toward a broad negotiation of all major problems dividing East and West" and, therefore, should not be discounted. The press also gave prominence to Mayor Brandt's speech closing a conference of prominent German and American leaders in which he stressed the need for Western initiative on Berlin. Rome's Il Tempo also urged the need for Western preparation, solidarity and determination. The paper warned that the major question is not the removal of offensive weapons from Cuba, but whether the "Soviet policy in favor of easing tension or the Chinese bellicose policy will prevail within the communist world."

AFRICA

Media and official public reaction in Africa continued to be light and varied. The President of Togo said the American action was "understandable" but certain newspapers in Ghana and Nigeria continued their criticism of the U.S. The scattered post-mortems on the crisis ranged from an alleged connection between Cuba and the U.S. elections to a warning that the Soviets may try similar maneuvers elsewhere.

Attitudes Toward U.S. Actions

One of the few public expressions of official support for the U.S. came in a statement by the President of Togo. After commenting that the quarantine might have been submitted to UN decision, Mr. Olympio said that "no one would permit a revolver to be pointed at his head" and that the "action of the U.S. is understandable."

The party-controlled press in Ghana continued to carry articles reflecting Communist China's position with regard to Cuba. The official radio station stated that the "blockade" continued in effect despite withdrawal of the missiles and that "this compels people to wonder if the missile base excuse was in fact genuine." The radio also alleged a connection between Cuba and the U.S. election.

In Nigeria the West African Pilot, consistently critical of the U.S. in the Cuban crisis, carried a story mentioning the Alpha 66 "gang pirates created by the U.S." and condemning American "naked aggression" against Cuba. An article in the Daily Express reviewed the pros and cons of American interest in Cuba but was on balance critical.

Post-Mortems on the Crisis

L'Action, organ of the governing Neo-Destour party in Tunisia, carried an interpretive article entitled "Mr. Khrushchev's Calculated Risk," citing Cuba and the Sino-Indian conflict as examples of the

Communist tactic of making "outrageous moves" in the hopes of securing significant gains in the process of reaching a new settlement. Referring to a "reason of principle" making it impossible for the U.S. to swap the bases in Turkey for those in Cuba, the writer warned against permitting Soviet use of the "calculated risk" elsewhere.

In Libya the Tripoli Mirror suggested that Soviet efforts to gain a "propaganda victory from the set-back in Cuba" resulted from "deep concern over the Indo-China dispute" in view of the latter's "repercussions on the Communist camp... and anti-Russian feelings among non-aligned nations." The Mirror concluded that the "un-anticipated gesture of cooperation" between the U.S. and Soviet Union proved that "the possibility of solving international disputes without resort to wars still exists."

NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Removal of the missiles from Cuba was merely the beginning, not the end of the Cuba crisis in the opinion of commentators in the Near East and South Asia. Other trouble spots, they also say, still exist, and the Soviet Union may request U.S. concessions in exchange for Soviet concessions in Cuba. The U.S. will remain firm, however, say America's friends, while "neutrals" blame "obstinate and hard conditions" by the U.S. for the lack of a solution to the Cuba crisis.

No Cuba Solution Yet

Calcutta's influential Amrita Bazar Patrika is among newspapers saying: "The Soviet decision to withdraw missiles from Cuba averted the immediate possibility of a world war, but the situation in Cuba has continued to be explosive because other sources of conflict have not yet been removed." These include continued U.S. reconnaissance flights and the question of Soviet jet bombers still in Cuba. Radio Damascus said that the crisis has not ended because of "America's obstinate and hard conditions on pledging non-invasion of Cuba."

Spread of Crisis to Europe

Greek papers expect the Soviet Union to demand something in return for its concessions in Cuba. "The Berlin and German issues," writes pro-Government Akropolis of Athens, "are more dangerous and grave than the problem of Cuba" because the Soviets merely lost a "warlike bridgehead" whereas in Berlin "her European empire as a whole is at stake." The paper expected the U.S. to remain firm, however. This sentiment is also echoed by Istanbul's Yeni Sabah.

Turkish Bases

On NATO bases in Turkey, Yeni Gun of Ankara wrote on November 12; "American voices" now suggest "the refusal to trade Cuban and Turkish bases does not mean that Americans want bases

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to remain in Turkey. Removal of these bases would lessen close cooperation between Turkey and the U.S. and would react against the feeling of Turkish people that the U.S. will immediately come to Turkey's help when necessary."

Soviet Boasts Proved Hollow

A small weekly Bengali-language paper, Jugabari, has said that "President Kennedy's slap at Russia in Cuba has proved the hollowness of Soviet boasts about her military might... Russian ships carrying arms fled away out of fear."

U.S. News Blackout on Cuba

An Egyptian columnist wrote November 19 that, "unlike the U.S.A. which imposes a news blackout on Cuban news, we are not subjected to censorship."

FAR EAST

Japanese media gave renewed attention to Cuban issues this week in concentrating straight news coverage on the bomber removal issue. Wide play was given to Castro's announcement that he would give up the Soviet bombers. Editorial reflections on the general status of the cold war after Cuba were carried by Asahi, which began to see some value in maintaining current spheres of influence, and Chuo Koron, a leading intellectual monthly, which concluded that the U.S. had won only a 50 percent victory because of its "no invasion" pledge. The Philippines Herald felt that Khrushchev would be willing to remove the bombers because he had missiles hidden in Cuba, and therefore concluded that the President must insist on ground inspection. The Manila Times, however, questioned the validity of the report about hidden missiles and voiced the possibility that it might be an effort on the part of these advocates of a Cuban invasion to change the President's restrained policy. The Straits Times of Malaya, formerly critical of U.S. Cuban policy, now raps Khrushchev for not living up to his agreement to on-site inspection. The paper foresees more "brinksmanship," with Khrushchev again retreating.

Japanese Reflections

During the latter half of last week Japanese media returned Cuban stories to a position of prominence, with major papers focusing their attention on the joint Soviet-Cuba proposals and the bomber issue. Throughout the week a moderate level of comment reflected on the post-Cuba position of the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Asahi, Japan's number one paper, ran a six-part analysis entitled "World After Cuba." It indicated belief in a limit to cold-war dynamics and "big-powerism," but said there is also value in maintaining the present spheres of influence. This commentary was an

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infrequent example of an appreciation of balance-of-power considerations by the Asahi. The idea was partially echoed by a leading NHK (quasi-governmental) TV commentator who said the Cuba issue must be solved before taking up the Berlin problem. He added that the present power balance should not be disturbed in seeking a solution to Berlin.

Three Cuba-related articles are carried in the December issue of Chuo Koron, a highly influential intellectual monthly magazine. One analytical article concludes the Administration won only a 50 percent victory because it "cannot" interfere with Castro. The article went on to predict the President will continue a policy of "power diplomacy" while covering it up with "New Frontier slogans" and the Peace Corps.

Hidden Missiles

The Philippines Herald and the Manila Times both had editorials on the possibility of hidden Soviet missiles in Cuba, but reached divergent conclusions. The Herald voiced its suspicion that the Soviet Union and Castro were attempting to double cross the United States by hiding the missiles. In view of such duplicity, the Herald said, it was understandable that Khrushchev would be disposed to remove the bombers. The paper concluded that President Kennedy "is expected to assert the same firmness in his insistence on ground inspection" that he has shown in regard to the removal of the bombers.

The Times worried that if the report about hidden missiles were true, an American invasion of Cuba might not be far off, and if it were false, it meant that advocates of an armed invasion were engaged in a dangerous attempt to reverse the "restrained" policy of the Administration.

CHINA

Today's Peking papers (November 21) feature Castro's latest letter to U Thant, but there is no reference to Peking's reaction to Castro's offer to release the Soviet bombers. Rather, Peking headlines the news as a "reaffirmation" of Cuba's determination to resist U.S. pressures.

The New China News Agency also publicizes reports that the United States gave Khrushchev a "deadline" for agreement on the removal of the bombers. The same item notes that the United States is insisting on international verification of the removal of all offensive weapons.